

## **Journal of Library and Information Services in Distance Learning.**

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Quoting from the Editor's introduction in Volume I No.1, 2004, this is the first commercially published, scholarly journal which specifically addresses the issues and concerns of librarians and information specialists in this rapidly growing field. The journal is published quarterly, is international, and the articles are peer-reviewed. Each issue contains research/review articles on relevant topics to library and information services for distance learning.

Each issue also includes a Book Reviews section on books relevant to the subject field, and an Eservices in Libraries section that reviews relevant electronic resources and services in distance learning.

I examined Vol. I No. 1, 2004. Some of the topics covered in this volume are:

Research on library services for distance learning: An international perspective, by Alexander L Slade. He examines the research that has been conducted on the library support for distance learning, identifying priorities for future research. He found that the literature on library services for distance learning tends to be weighted towards practice and application, with not much emphasis on research studies. He then summarises the findings of selected international studies, illustrating the types of research conducted on library services for distance learning, in an attempt to identify common themes in user needs and service provision.

Linda Frederiksen in Beyond the extended campus library: A brief history of the Distance Learning Section, ACRL. This article traces the development of the Distance Learning Section of the American Library Association's Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), detailing the dynamic nature of the organisation, one of the fastest growing sections within the ACRL

A usage survey of standards and guidelines affecting library services to distance education nursing programs, by Baron Lessin, Barbara Redman and Nancy Wilmes, reports on a survey concerning these documents and their usefulness to those planning or enhancing library services supporting distance nursing programmes and students.

John Stratton's article on An information access model at a distant branch library highlights the issues confronting librarians who work in branch libraries distant from the parent institution, thus faced with unique challenges to meet users' needs for scholarly information for a wide array of academic disciplines

Nancy Burich discusses The changing face of distance learning: Implications for distance learning librarians in the opinion/editorial discussion article "Voices from the Frontlines", the intention of which is to present opinions backed up by the personal knowledge and experiences of the author(s). Nancy Burich covers the process used to change a distance learning service model. After describing the strategies used by the author, a literature review analyses the works seen as particularly relevant. Finally, a checklist for initiating change is provided to help others work through a similar process.

Some of the other topics published in later issues are:

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- They give credit for that? Accreditation, assessment and distance learning services
- Distance education support in university libraries
- Academic library web sites and distance education: A content analysis
- Interactive video technology and distance learning
- The role of libraries in web-based distance education

The articles are useful and relevant to various aspects of distance learning. There are the research and review articles which are academically stimulating, as well as providing practical information in this field. Based on information on Sabinet, there are very few international journals available in South Africa on this subject field.

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